

sds new left notes



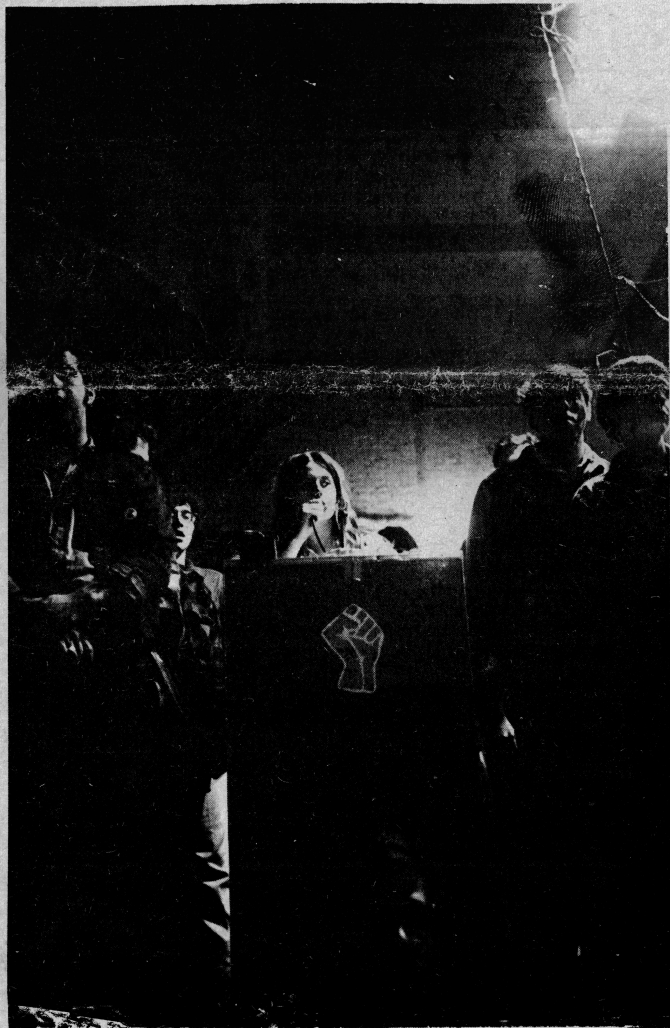
Vol. 4, no. 23

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE June 25, 1969

inside

Inside this four-page issue of New Left Notes is the 16-page pre-convention issue containing proposed resolutions. We were unable to send out this issue last week because of the time pressure the convention caused. The resolutions which were passed will be printed in the next issue of NLN. (See Page 4 for the resolution on the fall national action.)

NATIONAL CONVENTION EXPELS RACIST PL, AND ELECTS NEW OFFICERS



Bernardine Doherty reads PL out of the organization; on her immediate left is Mark Rudd, the new National Secretary.

THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH PL WAS EXPELLED, ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

1. We support the struggles of the black and Latin colonies within the U.S. for national liberation, and we recognize those nations' rights to self-determination (including the right to political secession, if they desire it).

2. We support the struggle for national liberation of the people of South Vietnam, led by the National Liberation Front and the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government. We also support the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, led by President Ho Chi Minh, as well as the Democratic Republic of China, the People's Republics of Korea and Albania, and the Republic of Cuba, all waging fierce struggles against U.S. imperialism. We support the right of all peoples to pick up the gun to free themselves from the brutal rule of U.S. imperialism.

The Progressive Labor Party has attacked every revolutionary nationalist struggle of the black and Latin peoples in the U.S. as being racist and reactionary. For example, they have attacked open admission, black studies, community control of police and schools, the Black Panther Party and their "breakfast for children" program, and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

The Progressive Labor Party has attacked Ho Chi Minh, the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, the revolutionary government of Cuba—all leaders of the people's struggles for freedom against U.S. imperialism.

The Progressive Labor Party, because of its positions and practices, is objectively racist, anti-communist, and reactionary. PLP has also in principle and practice refused to join the struggle against male supremacy. It has no place in SDS, an organization of revolutionary youth.

For these reasons, which have manifested themselves in practice all over the country, as well as at this convention, and because the groups we look to around the world for leadership in the fight against U.S. imperialism, including the Black Panther Party and the Brown Berets, urge us to do so, SDS feels it is now necessary to rid ourselves of the burden of allowing the politics of the Progressive Labor Party to exist within our organization. Progressive Labor Party members and all people who do not accept the above two principles are no longer members of SDS.

We should rid our ranks of all impotent thinking. All views that overestimate the strength of the enemy and underestimate the strength of the people are wrong. (Mao, Red Book, Page 86)

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VICTORIOUS STRUGGLE

by Mark Rudd, National Secretary; Jeff Jones, Inter-organizational Secretary; Bill Ayers, Education Secretary

The revolutionary youth movement, the black liberation struggle, the working class, and the whole international struggle against imperialism won a victory and took a step forward at the June 1969 SDS convention.

This convention expelled from the organization all members of the Progressive Labor Party and all others who share their betrayal of the struggle of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and their active opposition to the struggle for self-determination of the black people within the United States.

This action is a direct outcome and consequence of the great advances over the last year and a half made on all fronts against imperialism, especially by the struggle in Vietnam and the black liberation movement, and on the part of SDS in the strength and clarity of its alignment with these struggles. It is an outcome of the great advances made in practice by the youth movement in fighting imperialism directly, at San Francisco State, Kent State, Berkeley, etc., and the increasingly obvious detrimental and reactionary role played by the PLP through its active opposition to revolutionary nationalist struggles.

This contradiction in practice, between active support for liberation struggles and active opposition, has existed for a long time within our organization, but has sharpened in the last year. What became clear in the course of this convention is that we cannot demand of people outside the organization a choice which we are unwilling to enforce within it. The decision of the convention to exclude the PLP was the resolution of that contradiction; and it makes explicit the principles upon which SDS must be built.

Within the world today, the most important revolutionary struggle is between the national liberation movements of the colonized nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and U.S. imperialism. These are primarily revolutionary nationalist struggles. Revolutionary nationalism, on the part of an oppressed colonized people, far from being the reactionary ideology that PLP claims it is, is an intrinsic part of revolutionary internationalism. To accept and defend revolutionary nationalism, far from being harmful to working class revolution, is a necessary component of it if one desires to actually be revolutionary in relation to reality.

The Progressive Labor Party has claimed that its line is "pro-working class," and that it has fought strenuously against "anti-working class" ideas within SDS. In fact, taking a line that is opposed to revolutionary nationalism is harmful to the international proletariat—it is objectively "anti-working class"—and, as such, is harmful to the working class in America. The white working class must be won to an anti-racist, anti-imperialist movement if it is ever to participate in a revolution to end its own exploitation, emiseration, and enslavement by this imperialist monster. Further, SDS's strategy for reaching the working class is through the revolutionary youth movement—by building a fighting force of working class youth committed to the struggles for national liberation and self-determination, to the international proletariat as a whole.

Thus the political difference is not one "within the left" or "within the movement"; it is a principled difference on what the movement is about, where and what class war is, and who the sides of it are. If the PLP opposes revolutionary nationalism on the part of colonized peoples; opposes the self-determination of the black colony within the U.S.; opposes the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and call Ho Chi Minh a traitor; then they are in no sense part of the people's movement and in fact serve the enemy of the people, U.S. imperialism, which is waging fierce wars of aggression and suppression against revolutionary nationalist struggles, the self-determination of the black colony, and the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

—While black students were waging a militant struggle around admissions and self-determination at City College in N.Y., Third World members of PLP infiltrated the occupied South Campus to organize against the demands;

—While black students were demanding more control of the SEEK program at Queens College, PLP denounced the demands. The SDS office was attacked by black students as a result of PLP's actions. A month later blacks were chased off the campus by white racists—and only a few white persons fought with the blacks.

—While black students at Columbia University were struggling around black control of black admissions, PLP refused to support their demands, and acted on university expansion, claiming it was the only way to fight racism.

—In Chicago on election day, PLP put out a leaflet denouncing the election day strike leaders as "adventurist".

—At a Black Panther rally on the Circle Campus of the University of Illinois in Chicago, a PLP member read a program he had already agreed with the Panthers not to read, and was physically ejected from the podium.

—At San Francisco State, after supporting the demands and the struggle led by BSU/TWLF, PLP changed its line in the last weeks of the strike, saying that special admission of black and brown students and

the newly won Black Studies Department was "bourgeois" and co-optive, and denounced the leadership of the struggle as "nationalist." The next rally called by PLP was boycotted by all black and brown students and all community organizations.

—And, while SDS as a whole has been trying to organize an internationalist, anti-imperialist working class youth movement, PL has labeled Ho Chi Minh a "traitor," has accused the NLF of "making deals" with the imperialists, has denounced Cuba as "revisionist," and has called the Black Panther Party "racist in reverse."

The expulsion of the Progressive Labor Party was decided on at a meeting resulting from a walkout led by Bernardine Dohrn and Mike Klonsky from the original meeting room. The walkout occurred Friday night, the first day of the actual convention, after a presentation by members of the Black Panther Party denouncing the racism of the all-white "self-proclaimed vanguard," the PLP. In addition, a spokesman for the Brown Berets had read a letter jointly approved by the national leadership of the Black Panther Party, the Brown Berets, the Young Lords Organization, and other black and Latin organizations, as well as the Young Patriots, a community organization of white youth, which stated in part: "We demand that by the conclusion of the National Convention of the Students for a Democratic Society, the Progressive Labor Party change its position on the right to self-determination and stand in concert with the oppressed peoples of the world and begin to follow a true Marxist-Leninist ideology," and further, "SDS will be judged by the company they keep and the efficiency and effectiveness with which they deal with bourgeois factions in their organization."

This meeting was at first far from unanimous. The ISC and other opportunists argued that there was no principled split, that to have walked out was manipulative, and that to expel the PLP would be even more democratic. Bernardine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, the Seattle regional caucus, and others argued for expulsion on the grounds that there was no basis for PLP even existing within our organization, or for their legitimacy within the people's movement at all. Various other people argued for the forming of a more active caucus within the same organization as PLP, or even for leaving SDS to them and forming a new organization. However, in the course of a day's debate, the vast majority of people were won to the necessity to expel PLP and actively write them out of the revolutionary movement, as they had already written themselves out through their opposition to black self-determination and revolutionary nationalism.

The academic argument that the split was not "politically" spelled out before the walkout was rejected, as the walkout itself was understood as political. It was the conclusion of over a year of clarifying political

differences—especially at Ann Arbor, Austin, again at this convention, and in many sections of the organization on the local level. Further, the legalistic argument that we should take a vote among the entire convention body was rejected, as it meant counter-revolutionaries having the right to "vote" on their own counter-revolutionary nature. Our task was not to vote: People saw clearly that our political position required action, that action alone would clarify the irreconcilable and antagonistic character of the differences in a way that no words could possibly have done.

The 1969 SDS convention must be considered a critical turning point in the development of SDS as a mass revolutionary organization. Over the past year we have made many advances, while we have still failed substantially in providing real material support to the black liberation struggle and the Vietnamese war of liberation. We have failed to keep the war the key issue—and immediate withdrawal the key demand—in our movement. We have failed to defend the Black Panther Party in a strenuous, militant, and consistent way. We have failed to take the issues of the black and Vietnamese struggles to the masses of working class youth—challenging white supremacy, male supremacy, and anti-communism, and building a mass based fighting force of revolutionary youth.

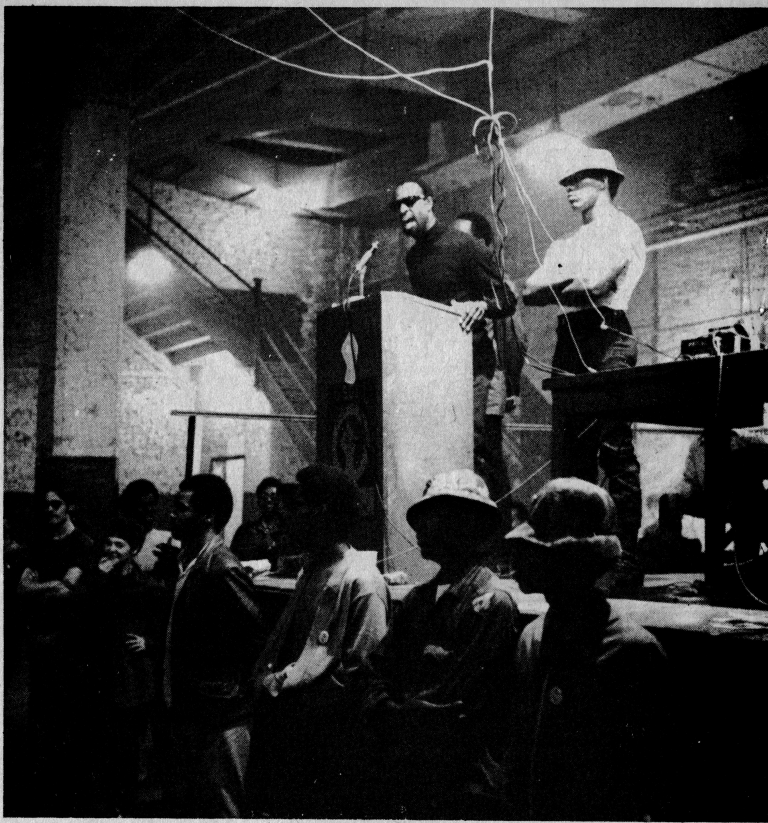
These tasks remain before us. Having expelled the PLP on the basis of their theory and practice of betraying revolutionary youth movement struggles in support of the People's War in Vietnam and the black liberation movement.

The national action in the fall gives us this opportunity. It must be the culmination of our summer work in the cities, bringing out thousands of newly won working class youth. It will bring the war home and carry it to the American people. It will unify our movement and draw a clear line between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary practice. It will strengthen all of our local organizing by sharpening and focusing our day to day work.

Work on the action is beginning immediately. Hundreds of thousands of pieces of literature must be produced, fund raising must be undertaken, and chapters must begin to lay the groundwork for the action. Hundreds of people will go to the Black Panther Party-called United Front Against Fascism Conference in California in July, and this action will be proposed and discussed at that conference, along with other activities of support for the black liberation struggle.

All chapters should contact the National Office for information, and also send us your comments and criticisms of the actions at the national convention. Support and co-ordination will be important in the coming period. Let us hear from you.

All Power to the People! Long live the victory of People's War!



Black Panther Party spokesman addresses the National Convention.

BLACK PANTHER STATEMENT

(Read to the National Convention on the third day)

After long study and investigation of Students for a Democratic Society and the Progressive Labor Party in particular, we have come to the conclusion that the Progressive Labor Party has deviated from Marxist-Leninist ideology on the National Question and the right of self-determination of all oppressed people.

We demand that by the conclusion of the National Convention of the Students for a Democratic Society that the Progressive Labor Party change its position on the right to self-determination and stand in concert with the oppressed peoples of the world and begin to follow a true Marxist-Leninist ideology.

There is still the question of the positions taken by the Progressive Labor Party on Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, and the vanguard position of the Black Panther Party. These questions will be dealt with at a future time; but the issue of self-determination is too great a policy to be overlooked at this time.

If the Progressive Labor Party continues its egocentric policies and revisionist behavior, they will be considered as counter-revolutionary traitors and will be dealt with as such.

Students for a Democratic Society will be judged by the company they keep and the efficiency and effectiveness with which they deal with bourgeois factions in their organization.

Black Panther Party
Brown Berets
Young Lords Organization

Press Statement

June 24, 1969

The 1969 SDS Convention has been one of the most important in our history. Two decisions were made that have serious implications for SDS and the entire world-wide anti-imperialist movement.

First, we have expelled members of Progressive Labor Party from our ranks. We have taken this action because of Progressive Labor Party's objectively racist and counter-revolutionary positions and actions. Progressive Labor Party has attacked all nationalism, calling it reactionary. This has led Progressive Labor Party to attack struggles for black community control of police, black studies programs, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, the Black Panther Party and their breakfast for children program, as well as actively organizing against open admissions for black and brown people in City College in New York, Queens College, Brooklyn College, and other schools. They have said that they support black liberation; in fact, they support black liberation struggles everywhere except where they exist.

Progressive Labor Party has further attacked the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Cuba, and other leading forces in the people's fight against U.S. imperialism. They have served the interests of imperialism by attacking the heroic leaders of the struggle for world revolution.

We in SDS have for some time understood that there is need for a world-wide socialist revolution against U.S. imperialism. We have understood that that revolution is already being waged in Vietnam, in Cuba, in Bolivia, in Angola, and in dozens of other Third World countries. That revolution is being led in the U.S. by black and Latin peoples fighting for their liberation and self-determination. Behind the growth of the Black Panther Party, black and brown student unions, La Raza, Alianza, and numerous other organizations of the black and Latin people, as well as the development of struggles all the way from free medical clinics to uprisings in the community is this one essential fact: the oppressed and colonized peoples of this country are engaging in a struggle for their liberation, and they will surely win!

The struggle of the peoples of the world for their freedom is in the interests of the people of the whole world, including all working people within the U.S. We have fought for years to build active struggles in solidarity with those of the black and Third World peoples. This is the meaning behind the struggles at Columbia, San Francisco State, and a thousand other colleges and high schools. We have done this not out of guilt, but out of the sure knowledge that the battles of the oppressed peoples of the world are the key to toppling this racist, imperialist system. Most of our organizing work has been to win people to this position and to force them to choose sides in the world revolution. But how could we demand of people outside the organization what we could not demand of people inside? Our only solution to this contradiction was to expel those who sabotaged and attacked the real struggles of the people of the world—our struggles—so that the movement could continue to grow and win.

Secondly, the SDS Convention is taking the lead in raising the level of militancy and seriousness of the movement to stop the Vietnam war. The people of this country will not be fooled by Nixon's talk of "de-escalation" in Vietnam. He is using his so-called peace gestures to cover up the increasing brutality, genocide, and repression against the blacks, the revolutionary youth movement, and all opposition to imperialism within the U.S.

SDS will respond by increasing its work with working class young people, in the army, in communities, and in work places throughout the country. We will be everywhere. We will build a revolutionary youth movement capable of actively engaging in the war against the imperialists. We will escalate our attacks until imperialism is defeated in Vietnam.

This fall, in Chicago, at the time the Conspiracy trials begin, we will lead massive demonstrations against the war, in support of the Black Panther Party, and in solidarity with all political prisoners, including Huey P. Newton and the eight under attack for last summer's righteous demonstrations. Throughout the fall, we will continue actions to stop the war and increase our attack on imperialism.

The SDS Convention also elected national officers for the coming year. The three national secretaries are: Jeff Jones, 22, Inter-organizational Secretary; Mark Rudd, National Secretary; and Bill Ayers, 24, Educational Secretary.

The National Interim Committee members are: Howie Machtinger, Chicago; Linda Evans, Detroit; Bob Avakian, San Francisco; Corky Benedict, Cleveland; Barbara Riley, New York; Noel Ignatin, Chicago; Mike Klonsky, Chicago; and Bernardine Dohrn, Chicago.

KNOW YOUR ENEMIES

At the meeting held by the PLP and Worker-Student Alliance members expelled from SDS, a slate of so-called "National Officers" was elected. These so-called "national officers" include as the three National Secretaries John Pennington, national secretary from the Boston-Cambridge area, Pat Forman from San Francisco, and Alan Spector, also from the Boston-Cambridge area.

"National Secretary" John Pennington is the individual who refused to testify last spring at the Boston trial of Motherfucker Ben Morea. Ben was on trial for felonious assault on a group of Marines who had attacked him and some other brothers and sisters outside the Arlington Church near the Boston Commons last summer. In the attack one of the Marines was stabbed in the stomach.

Not only did Pennington refuse to testify at Ben's trial (on the grounds that Ben would not allow him to make a political statement about the Worker Student Alliance), but he also spread vicious lies around the country that Ben had in fact started the attack himself, going after a Marine who was on crutches.

Pennington's PIG work was unsuccessful and Morea was acquitted by the trial jury.

We must fight these phonies and expose them every time they appear and attempt to represent our organization. The PLP and WSA must stand before the people on their own politics and principles and not attempt to use the name of our organization as a cover for their own weak, counter-revolutionary politics.

THE PEOPLE WILL NOT TOLERATE THESE OPPORTUNISTS!!!

New Left Notes

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Mark Rudd, National Secretary; Jeff Jones, Inter-organizational Secretary; Bill Ayers, Education Secretary

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Members of the heroic SDS security force.

TAKE THE WAR TO THE PEOPLE

(This resolution, passed by the National Convention, was submitted by Mike Klonsky, NIC member; Marilyn Katz, Chicago; Marv Treiger, Bay Area RU, and others.)

The rebirth of the American revolutionary movement has been closely linked with the heroic struggles of the Vietnamese people fighting against US imperialism for national liberation. This struggle has been like a beacon to all the oppressed peoples of the world, showing them that the power of the people is invincible in the end. The Vietnamese fight has served to heighten the consciousness and level of struggle here within the heart of the monster. The youth movement can trace its heightened development directly to the early resistance to the war on the part of youth, who were the first to recognize the contradictions and gain the understanding that the war in Vietnam served no one but the rich.

We must understand the dialectical relationship that exists between the struggle in Vietnam and the class struggle in the US. Each blow we strike against US monopoly capitalism is of multiple benefit not only to the Vietnamese but to all other oppressed people as well. Just as the Vietnamese have been kicking ass despite seemingly insurmountable odds, we too have been advancing our struggle to win the masses of the American people to the fight against imperialism. Our task now is to convert mass sentiment against the war into mass action capable of ending the war.

The proletariat is the key force in the fight against imperialism and is the class that is hit hardest by the developing crisis in the system. It is working people who pay for the wars of oppression with their lives and their labor. The crisis in imperialism has meant triple taxes, cutbacks in safety, speed-up, falling wages, and death on the front lines to working people. Black and brown workers have been hit the hardest and black people have led in the resistance movement against the war. The rebellions in Detroit, Watts, etc. have been the vanguard actions against US imperialism in Vietnam by bringing the war home. Two divisions of troops were sent to Detroit instead of to Vietnam to put down urban insurrections.

The imperialist system is increasingly

vulnerable. Inflation is running wild and the international monetary system is approaching crisis. This situation, as well as the mass work of the anti-war movement, has already won a majority of working people to opposition to the war. However, we are at a point now, primarily due to the tremendous victories of the Vietnamese and the over-extension of manpower and resources of the imperialists, where the demand "Get out of Vietnam Now!" takes on a new aspect. The Vietnamese taking the war to the people of the world by way of their heroic action have won the support of the masses of people throughout the world. Our rebuilding of a militant class-conscious movement against the war, here in the mother country, can be the straw that breaks the camel's back and makes "GET OUT OF VIETNAM" a reality.

In practice, this means a revival of the mass movement against the war, elevated to a higher level of militancy which will be powerful because of the working class base and leadership. Some people might think that by winning large numbers of working people to our mass actions, the level of militancy of those actions will drop. In actuality, increased numbers of working people will raise the level of our militancy. To understand this, you only have to watch the response on the part of workers when their wildcat strike is attacked by the pigs.

Our youth movement is one of the important roads to the working class. It is young workers that are the ones who must fight their class brothers in Vietnam. They are also hit hardest by layoffs. Young workers are also generally easier to break away from national chauvinism. Through the young workers, we can extend the movement against imperialism into the working class as a whole.

Our movement is presently facing a new level of attack on the part of the reactionary forces. Repression has escalated, particularly against the black liberation struggle. Responses to this repression on the part of our movement have varied and sometimes have meant mistakes, playing right into the hands of the oppressor.

Reactionary attacks have led some people to forget about our primary task of winning the masses to the struggle. They have turned inward and withdrawn from mass struggle.

There has been a tendency to forget about militant actions and the need to build a fighting movement.

We should see an increase in actions against the war and imperialism as a revolutionary response to repression. By taking the issues to the people, we do exactly what the repression is aimed at stopping us from doing. Repression attempts to isolate the revolutionary elements from the people and turn them inward towards themselves. As we take our movement to the people, the level of tactics will be elevated. A fall action could be coordinated, for example around the trial in Chicago of the Conspiracy 8, making it clear to the people that we will not be scared off by repression and fascist attacks.

The Vietnamese, through the formation of the new revolutionary government, have shown us what internationalism means. They have a program of support for the struggles of oppressed peoples in Africa, Asia, Latin America and black people in the US. Our response must be to win the masses of Americans to support of the struggles of the oppressed nations for self-determination. This is the primary way in which we can break the chains that tie them to capitalism.

Up until now, lack of international solidarity on the part of US white workers has meant that they were objectively scabbing on the rest of the world proletariat.

One of the ways in which we build this solidarity is by attacking white supremacy. We should see that white supremacy and national chauvinism are key factors in the war in Vietnam and that the war is a white supremacist war. By attacks on white supremacy, we can also connect the war in Vietnam to the war in the black colony in the minds of the people.

Therefore, we must develop a program for the summer and fall which:

- (1) builds a broad based attack against imperialism;
- (2) drives that movement into the proletariat and fights for proletarian leadership within the anti-imperialist movement;
- (3) raises the level of militancy of this movement as a response to repression;
- (4) makes the demand "IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM" an

operative rather than simply an agitational demand.

PROGRAM:

(1) SDS should call for a mass action against the war for Sept. 26-28 in Chicago. This should be a broad based action that attempts to involve the most people possible in militant struggle. The demands should include:

IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL U.S. OCCUPATION TROOPS FROM VIETNAM, THE BLACK AND BROWN COMMUNITIES AND THE SCHOOLS, AND ALL FOREIGN COUNTRIES

SUPPORT FOR BLACK LIBERATION

FREE HUEY NEWTON AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

NO MORE SURTAX

INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO

SOLIDARITY WITH CONSPIRACY 8

SUPPORT FOR GIs' RIGHTS AND GI REBELLIONS

(2) The NO should produce literature which explains the implications of the crisis in world imperialism and show working people how they are being screwed by imperialism in Vietnam and throughout the world, including her at home.

(3) We should build a program over the summer that builds toward this action by taking the issues to the masses of working people. This can be done through a program of work in factories and in working class communities by taking our anti-imperialist politics with us. We should attempt to build revolutionary collectives wherever we work that can study revolutionary theory, apply it to practice and do criticism and self-criticism while developing a program in a collective way. This is also an important step to building a party of the proletariat, which is necessary if victory against imperialism is to be achieved.

We should build toward work stoppages and strikes and mobilizations of workers who are won to the fight.

(4) We should call on soldiers in the army to hold demonstrations during this period. We must work to develop programs within the Army that raise anti-imperialist consciousness and aid any such existing programs. We should avoid the mistake of economism in GI organizing, which limits organizing to GI rights issues. We must attack the notion that anti-imperialism and support for black liberation cannot be raised in the military because of the severe repression. We should support the fight for basic rights of GIs and fight to inject anti-imperialist consciousness into those struggles. In the past year, there have been tremendous struggles fought within the military which have been mostly black-led and which have struck at the heart of imperialism.

One of the best examples of proletarian internationalism was the revolt of the black GIs at Fort Hood during the Democratic Convention who refused to march on their class brothers in the streets of Chicago.

(5) A student strike should be called for the week of the demonstrations, making it clear that students will not sit by with their noses stuck in textbooks while imperialism is plundering the peoples of the world.

Through mass struggle and militant action we can turn the imperialists on their ear. Mao says that "all reactionaries attempt to stamp out revolution by mass murder, and they think that the more people they massacre, the weaker the revolution will become. But contrary to this wishful thinking of reaction, the facts are that the more people the reactionaries massacre, the greater the strength of the revolution becomes, the nearer the reactionaries are to their doom. This is an irresistible law."

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
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AND LIVES STOP APPEAL YOU TAKE IMMEDIATE

MEASURES PREVENT US WAR AVTS DEMAND US GOVERNMENT STOP ENCROACHMENTS

ON DRVN SECURITY SOVEREIGNTY STOP SINCERE THANKS

VIETMY

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